

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 04278 291559Z
ACTION SS-25

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AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 4278

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, PBOR, LE, IS, XF
SUBJ: ME STAFF GROUP: SOUTH LEBANON-ISRAELI
ATTITUDE TO ENTRANCE OF LEBANESE ARMY

REF: (A) TEL AVIV IR 6849031678 (DTG 290945ZMAR78), (B) BEIRUT
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1. RE PARA 5, REF B, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT ISRAELIS WANT
UNIFIL TO PERMANENTLY KEEP OUT OF THE CHRISTIAN ENCLAVES.
RATHER, THEY WOULD ARGUE THAT THE UN SHOULD FOR THE TIME BEING
AVOID MARJAYOUN AND OTHER CHRISTIAN TOWNS TO AVOID RUBING THE
FRAIL SENSITIVITIES OF HADDAD AND SHIDIAC THE WRONG WAY. GOI
SEES THIS SITUATION BEING RESOLVED OVER THE SHORT-RUN BY UN
IMPROVING ITS RELATIONS WITH CHRISTIANS IN THE SOUTH, TREATING
THEM GENTLY, MOVING SLOWLY AND IN STAGES, ETC. OVER THE LONGER

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PAGE 02 TEL AV 04278 291559Z

TERM, ISRAELIS SEE QUESTION OF UNIFIL OPERATIONS IN CHRISTIAN
ENCLAVES BEING SOLVED BY REINTEGRATION OF FORCES CONTROLLED
BY HADDAD AND SHIDIAC INTO LEBANESE ARMY.

2. ISRAELIS DESIRE REASSERTION OF GOL SOVEREIGNTY AND
ENTRY OF LEBANESE ARMY INTO ALL OF SOUTHERN LEBANON,
INCLUDING CHRISTIAN ENCLAVES. HOWEVER, THEY RAISE TWO

KEY PROVISOS. THE FIRST IS THAT THE GOL WILL HAVE TO INTEGRATE THE CHRISTIAN FORCES IN THE SOUTH INTO THE LEBANESE ARMY FORCES WHICH WILL BE OPERATING IN THIS AREA. ISRAELIS NEVER TIRE OF TELLING US THAT HADDAD AND SHIDIAC ARE LEBANESE ARMY OFFICERS WHO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THEIR SALARIES AND STRESS THAT ONCE CHRISTIAN FORCES ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE LEBANESE ARMY THEY WILL BE UNDER THE COMPLETE AUTHORITY AND DISCIPLINE OF THE GOL. THE OTHER PROVISIO IS THAT THE GOOD FENCE STAY OPEN.

3. ALTHOUGH THIS MAY NOT BE THE NEATEST SOLUTION FROM SOME PERSPECTIVES, WE SHOULD NOT ACCEPT POSSIBLE LEBANESE ARGUMENT THAT ISRAELI ATTITUDE PRECLUDES ARMY MOVEMENT TO SOUTH AND REASSERTION OF LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY THERE. THE IMPORTANT THING IS TO GET LEBANESE AUTHORITY BACK INTO SOUTHERN LEBANON. THE QUESTIONS OF DEALING WITH HADDAD, SHIDIAC AND THE CHRISTIAN FORCES IN GENERAL AND THE GOOD FENCE ARE THINGS WHICH CAN BE QUIETLY WORKED OUT LATER.
LEWIS

SECRET

NNN

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